

Femmes D'Esprit

VOYAGES

Spring 2014



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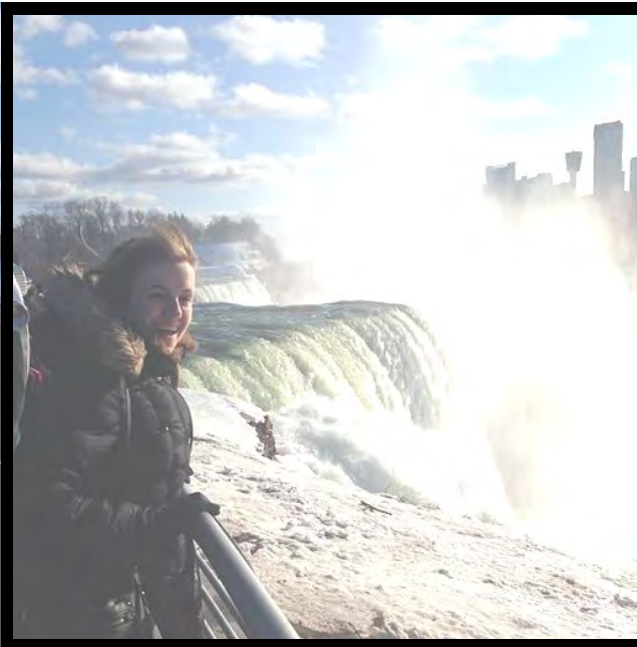
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Let me just start off by tipping my hat off to **Amelia Ellis**. Her editing capabilities are the upmost admirable and she is someone I often go to when I run into editorial issues. As we all know, looking for help is a sign of looking to improve and as **Amelia** opened last issue “aren’t editors supposed to work together anyway?” With practice and determination, I too will learn all of the tricks of the trade.

I joined the Honors Program this past fall, a year later than most of my fellow sophomore members. As the academic year comes to an end, I can confidently say that joining the Honors Program has done nothing but enrich my education at The College of New Rochelle.

With two years of college down, I have grown significantly both as an individual and an intellectual. Being a first generation college student, almost every opportunity that comes my



way is often a new experience and a chance for self-growth. I knew that joining the Honors Program was a larger scale opportunity that will provide many different learning experiences within itself. During this time in my life, I am opening my mind to many new ideas and experiences. Doing so thus far has allowed me to learn about various interests and skills that have gone undetected before. Getting involved with the on-campus publications is a great example this. Before college, I would have never considered writing for a publication. Fast-forward two years, and I am now taking on an editorial position for *Femmes d'Esprit*!

I cannot believe how quickly time has passed. I felt as if just a few days ago I was making my way to my first college class and now I am already halfway done! Before we all know it, we too will be in the seniors' positions and will be taking all that we have learned to guide us through the next chapter of our lives.

- Michelle Goyke, Class of 2016

About the Cover: Manuela Patino '15 stands on the shore of the island of Vieques with the research vessel *Corwith Cramer* behind her. She is spending the semester enrolled in the prestigious Williams Mystic Program. For more on her adventures, see page 7 in this issue!

HONORS MATTERS: TRANSITIONS

Dr. Amy Bass, Professor of History, Honors Program Director

While celebration, and a touch of sadness, tend to be the spirit of commencement each May, I find the ceremonies themselves to be a bit of a paradox. After four years of encouraging you all to think and discuss and question and challenge and analyze, we then ask you to sit quietly and listen to a range of speakers – most of whom you do not know – tell you what you are experiencing and what your future will hold. After four years of asking you to shake off the chains of passive learning and participate, graduation sends you to a chair and requires your silence.

Wouldn't it be great if we shook things up a little bit? Wouldn't it be fabulous if in the middle of the ceremony you could raise your hand and ask the commencement speaker a question? Can you imagine? "Ummmmm, yeah, that bit you were just saying about the economy, I don't think I agree. In Dr. Medina's class, we learned.....so could you expand on that point a bit?"

How can a two-hour ceremony, in which a range of overused aphorisms are assembled as advice, be the conclusion of four years of critical thinking?

Commencement ceremonies symbolize your shift into life as a well-educated person. But what, exactly, does that mean? One of the best pieces of advice – and it did not take place during a graduation ceremony – I ever received came from my doctoral dissertation advisor, Dr. Matthew Frye Jacobson, who holds the William Robertson Coe Professor of American Studies & History at Yale University, and today remains a close friend. For those of you who have worked with me, his advice will sound familiar. Dr. Jacobson told me to ignore the maxim that "God is in the details," a popular saying first advocated by German-American architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, a pioneer in minimalist design who also famously emphasized that "less is more." Mies was a path breaker, there is no doubt: his influence on what is now called "skin and bones" architecture was modernism personified. But in terms of mottos, Mies got it wrong, as explained to me by Dr. Jacobson who, after reading a lengthy graduate paper of mine, told me that God was not in the details, but rather the transitions. It's how connections are made between and among a set of particulars, including paragraphs, that create significance in this world, not in the isolated specifics themselves.

That conviction, I think, is helpful in terms of thinking about the college years and what they represent in terms of where you have been and where you are headed. W.E.B. Du Bois, who graduated from Harvard University with a Ph.D. in an era in which no black man ever had, said that a university is not about merely finding a job, but rather it is "*the organ of that fine adjustment between life and the growing knowledge of life, an adjustment which forms the secret of civilization.*" That is how I hope you leave The College of New Rochelle: sitting at commencement listening to what is being said, but also understanding that you have your own answers, your own transitions, and your own paths, to make. Good luck graduates: we miss you already.

WHAT HAS HONORS BEEN UP TO?

January:

- ◇ Welcome back!

February:

- ◇ First Honors board meeting of the semester was held.

March:

- ◇ Honors students took part in the I4 Conference at CNR, attending panels, serving as volunteers, and presenting posters.
- ◇ Senior Denise Dailey took part in CNR's plunge to Haiti.
- ◇ Honors students **Rashaa Parker**, **Katy Baudendistel**, and **Claudia Benitez** attended the Association for Women in Psychology conference (see photo, right) in Columbus, Ohio, where Katy presented "Fat Talking Feminists?" with Dr. Rebecca Lafleur.



April:

- ◇ **Katy Baudendistel**, **Michelle Goyke**, and **Regina Alvarado** joined hundreds of Honors students the NRHC conference in Niagara Falls, NY. Katy and Michelle presented a roundtable discussion on their work with **Daniel Smith** in the Honors seminar entitled "American Anxiety."
- ◇ Students from all aspects of the program presented their work at the annual Honors Conference Day, coordinated by senior **Catherine Santiavanez**.
- ◇ Honors students, including **Dorothy Thackeray**, **Claudia Benitez**, **Surya Brissett**, and **Lena Fin**, had their work featured at the Backstreet Gallery in New Rochelle.
- ◇ Students from Dr. Segura-Rico's "Discourses in American Slavery" travelled to the Brooklyn Art Museum to take in the exhibit "In Pursuit of Freedom" (see photo, right).



May:

- ◇ We say good-bye to the graduating seniors **Denise Dailey**, **Amelia Ellis**, **Cathy Santivanez**, **Ramya Bharathi**, **Alissa Sciommeri**, **Regina Alvarado**, and **Kayla Cummings**.
- ◇ Congratulations to **Amanda Hernandez** and **Katy Baudendistel** for receiving numerous study abroad scholarships for their trips to Japan and South Africa.

HONORS COURSES: FALL, 2014

First Year Offerings:

HON 110: *The First Year Experience* Dr. Jorge Medina

This course introduces students to the liberal arts, focused on the understanding of different ways of knowing. This year's theme, The Pursuit of Happiness, will be explored in this Honors section alongside all members of the first year cohort. In addition to the Friday breakout session, which will always take place in the Honors seminar room, students will take part in a series of lectures and meetings with professors from a variety of disciplines and majors in order to understand how different academic disciplines approach ideas of happiness. As well, Monday meetings with an array of professionals from Student Development will help students transition to college life. Reserved for incoming first year students. Please note: this course fulfills a requirement of the liberal arts core.

HON 105: *Honors Critical Research Essay* Dr. Daniel McCarthy

The barebones objective of this course is to explore the arts of research and writing by bringing into being a thoughtful research paper of substantial length. Designed to acquaint students with the philosophical foundations, methodologies, analytical tools, and conventions of research and writing, the course examines how research is produced, by whom, and for what purposes. Throughout the semester, students will participate in a series of exercises in writing, critical reading, presentation, peer review, and analysis designed to leave them prepared for more advanced courses in the academic fields of their choosing. Reserved for incoming first year students. Please note: this course fulfills a requirement of the liberal arts core.

Upper Division Offerings:

HON 304: *Genetics & Identity* Dr. Lynn Petrullo

James Watson, the co-discoverer of the structure of DNA, has stated that "DNA is what makes us human." What do you think? Explore this notion of identity in science, literature, art and film. In this "brave new (post-genomic) world," the implications of a genetic identity profoundly challenge personal, philosophical, cultural, legal, and political issues of identity. In this seminar, we will focus on the science, meaning and impact of genetic identity by considering historical and contemporary topics such as the Thomas Jefferson paternity case, forensic identifications of the Boston Strangler and Jack the Ripper, race-based therapeutics, behavioral genetic defenses in criminal court cases, and DNA chips as identity cards. A semester of reading and seminar discussion will culminate in the presentation of a final project in which each student will describe the genetic identification of a fictional character of unknown or questioned identity. Check out <http://youtube.com/watch?v=olyRQBnmQsg>. Open to sophomores-seniors.

HON 385: *Catastrophe!* Dr. Roblyn Rawlins

A one-year, six-credit required interdisciplinary experience, this first semester begins with an intensive readings and discussions that focus on the socially constructed concept of "catastrophe." Students will explore the cultural, political, and social ramifications of spectacle events such as Hurricane Katrina and September 11th. This work will lay the basis for the spring semester, in which students will engage in an in-depth study and analysis of some aspect of the fall semester's topic, presenting their findings at Honors Conference Day. Open to juniors and seniors.

HON 490: *Senior Symposium I* Dr. Amy Bass

Entitled "The Legacy of the Text," the first part of this year-long capstone symposium asks seniors to READ! Students, in consultation with disciplinary mentors, will consider a variety of texts that reflects both their major interests and their interdisciplinary training, producing sound written analysis and evaluation of their choices based on criteria they develop, and creating a list of 5 to 8 books for the group to read together. As the course proceeds into next semester, a series of deliberations and conversations – including online discussion groups – for each text will continue, with the goal of choosing the common reading for the incoming Honors class. Open to seniors only.

ANCHORS AWAY!

Manuela Patino, '15

The Williams-Mystic Program is an interdisciplinary program that offers students the opportunity to investigate the sea while traveling throughout the United States. My first offshore trip was to Puerto Rico and Vieques (a small island to the Southeast of Puerto Rico). The trip was a life-changing experience. It showed me the importance of team work, persistence and trust. Throughout the voyage on the research vessel *Corwith Cramer*, my team went through hard times, including sea sickness, and we had to complete the hard work that the ship required, but we overcame such obstacles as a team. We were also very fortunate to have wonderful times, which included picking fresh coconuts while on the island of Vieques, going out in the bowsprit, striking the sails, reading *Moby Dick* on deck, watching dolphins, and seeing rainbows just about every day, sometimes more than once. The trip was also a learning experience because my mate, Kevin, taught me celestial body navigation and I had to titrate at 3am in the morning (I will think about this next time I complain about having a long lab) to find oxygen levels. I was able to overcome my seasickness and my fear of the sea and I came back to Mystic a better person. I am thankful to the administrators and the professors at the College of New Rochelle for their help; I am especially thankful to Dr. Bass who gave me the opportunity to be part of this amazing program.



Manuela (second from the right in the first row) with her shipmates/classmates on the island of Vieques, just off the coast of Puerto Rico.

I GOT A JOB!

Molly McMurry '13

Recent Honors graduate Molly McMurray shares her post-college experience

Last May, in my Hooding Ceremony speech, I said "For many of us, when we leave Radio City tomorrow, we will be entering the real world. Life starts now. It will not be easy. The world can be unkind." I did not realize how true that statement was until I was back home, left with thousands of dollars in student loans, and no job.



The paleontology exhibit at the Houston Museum of Natural Science is considered one of the best in the country.

I applied to everything from waitress to sales clerk to cashier. It felt like there was nothing for a recent college graduate with a history degree. Most did not even seem to want a college graduate. My first job was working part-time for a friend's husband. There I was, four months after graduation, doing deliveries for an auto parts retailer. It barely covered my monthly student loan payments, let alone saving for grad

school. Four years of college and I was no closer to my dream than when I graduated high school. But it was a job and I was learning about cars and that kept me going for the next five months.

In January, I moved and I could not justify traveling forty-five minutes to a part-time job that I disliked. But moving into Houston provided me with a unique opportunity. Fifteen minutes away was the museum district, and it seemed like there was always a job opportunity there.

I am a Historian. My senior thesis at CNR, which I did with **Dr. Bass**, focused on grave memorials. I am happiest when I am surrounded by artifacts, books, or crawling around a Medieval Irish Castle. My ultimate goal is to be an archaeologist, forensic anthropologist, and a professor at a university, spreading the knowledge of history and joys of learning to another generation. What better place to start than a museum?

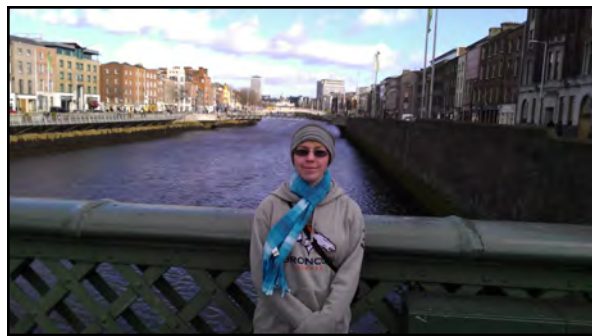
Three times I applied to the Houston Museum of Natural Science, one of the best museums in the country (I am totally not biased it is!). The first time I was ignored, the second time they found a better qualified applicant. Third time's the charm, I suppose, because barely two days after I interviewed I accepted a position as a customer service representative. I began officially working for the museum in March. We of Customer Service are the first faces people see when they enter the museum. We are the first to be asked questions and the first to impart knowledge.

A good start if I say so myself.

There are always stories of people climbing a ladder to reach greater heights (literally and figuratively). My position is entry level but I know, with hard work and my rather impressive knowledge of history and science (yes I am very humble), I can climb higher. My goals for the future are still intact. It may take me another year to reach grad school, or I may start this August, but I've got my short term goal set: tour guide in the Ancient Egyptian Exhibit and Hall of the Americas. Stop by in a year or so, I'll give you a tour.



Did you know? While job projections for recent graduates looked relatively bleak, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, a new study by the Association of American Colleges and Universities determined that liberal arts disciplines prepare graduates for long-term professional success.



Molly explored many medieval castles while studying in Northern Ireland her junior year at CNR.

LEAN IN

Regina Alvarado & Denise Dailey, Class of 2014

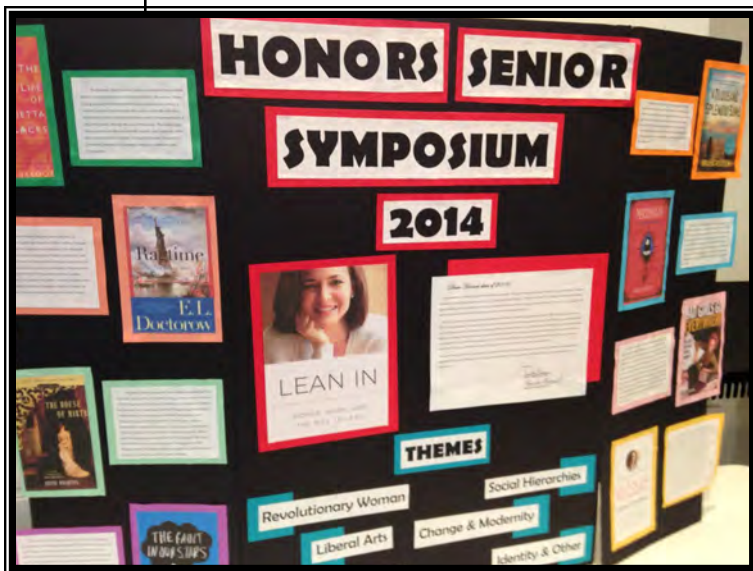
In Honors Senior Symposium, seniors must choose a text for the incoming Honors cohort.

Dear Honors class of 2018,

Congratulations on being accepted into the Honors program. We hope it inspires you to go beyond your perceived limits. We have selected *Lean In* by Sheryl Sandberg as the tool to help you achieve this goal. Some of you may have probably heard about this book prior to this day, since it created a tidal wave of responses, both positive and negative, upon its release. However, we encourage you to not let yourselves be swayed by the opinions of others prior to forming your own. You will encounter various approaches to feminism and Women's Studies throughout your life at CNR, regardless of your major. Do not be overwhelmed. Our intention with *Lean In* is to introduce you to these approaches in a way that both inspires and empowers you. We had set aside for ourselves various themes (Woman as Revolutionary, Social Hierarchies, Liberal Arts, Voices in Conversation, Identity and Other) to create standards that we would then enforce on the potential selections. We wanted to choose a contemporary work in order to encourage you to always be a part of the present literary and political moment. We also wanted to ensure that the book was likeable, in order to motivate each of you to read it in time for class discussions. Hopefully, you will like it, and you will find the

message to be relevant and offer great wisdom and inspiration. We urge you to take this book and share it with your peers, and inspire them the way we hoped to have inspired you.

Sincerely,
Denise & Regina



HONORS CONFERENCE—NRHC 2014



Regina Alvarado, '14

I was granted the opportunity to attend the Northeast Regional Honors Council Conference this year. Having been to the previous two conferences in Baltimore and Philadelphia, I was particularly excited to attend this year's conference in Niagara Falls. For me, attending the conference each year not only meant getting to interact with other honors students from around the region, but also getting to see and explore the host city. My time spent exploring Baltimore and Philadelphia at past conferences left me with many great memories and my time in Niagara Falls did the same.

Before we delved into the academic components of the conference, we explored the city of Niagara Falls through the City as Text events. I got to visit the Niagara Power Project Museum, which highlighted the various ways Niagara Falls is using hydraulic energy to produce electricity. The next stop in our day was to explore a popular hiking trail along the Niagara River. Due to inclement weather, we were not allowed to venture as far as desired, but the views were incredible nonetheless. Lastly, we stopped at a small town that was the last stop in the Underground Railroad. It had all the charm of a small town with an exciting history. It was here that I purchased my souvenir for the trip, a pair of one-of-a-kind earrings designed by a local artist.

As much as I enjoyed my City as Text day, I couldn't help but feel slightly underwhelmed with Niagara Falls (compared to Baltimore and Philadelphia). However, this all changed the moment I finally got to see the Falls themselves. Wow. Niagara Falls turned out to be one of those landmarks that actually goes beyond its reputation. There are many great photographs taken of the Falls but none can truly capture the magnitude and power that they exude. Looking at the water falling in such unimaginable amounts led me to convince myself that I could feel the ground shaking. It was amazing. I couldn't believe this beauty existed in a completely organic state. I always marvel at how beautiful Central Park is and attribute to its man-made origins. Yet, Niagara Falls exists in an even more sublime state and as a complete derivative of nature and time.

I had an incredible experience attending the paper presentations and roundtables in the following days but the image and experience of visiting the Falls are what I hold close to my heart. I will forever be thankful to the Honors Program for giving me this opportunity to visit such a wonderful city and to engage in amazing academic discussions.

HONORS CONFERENCE—NRHC 2014

Catherine Baudendistel, '16

How we spent our time at the NRHC in Niagara Falls

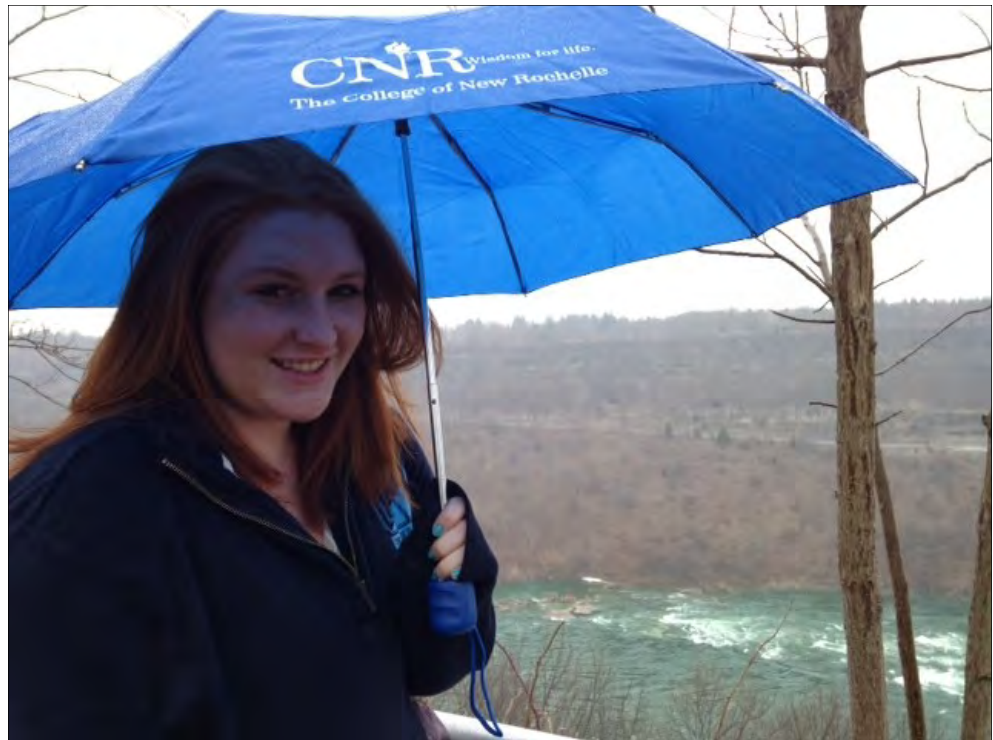


This was my second Honors Conference I have been to and I had the pleasure of presenting at a round table this year. Inspired by my final paper with my American

Anxiety course last semester with **Prof. Dan Smith, Michelle Goyke** and I presented “The Borders of Sanity: Do we really need that Xanax?” Our roundtable initiated enthusiastic conversations with students and faculty who also were passionate about direct-to-consumer advertising and pharmaceutical companies in America.

The 8 hour trip to Niagara Falls was a great road trip filled with music, laughs, and talks about future plans between **Regina, Michelle,** and myself. We

concluded that if we could be anyone when we grew up it would be **Dr. Bass, Dr. Segura-Rico,** or **Beyoncé**. We also met wonderful students from all over the Northeast at the conference. We spend some time with students from Lock Haven University and Monroe College from right down the road. The group of students this year really bonded. I was even surprised to see a student I went to high school with at the conference. I hope to go back to the Honors Conference to present again during my next two years at CNR!



NRHC 2014

Michelle Goyke, '16

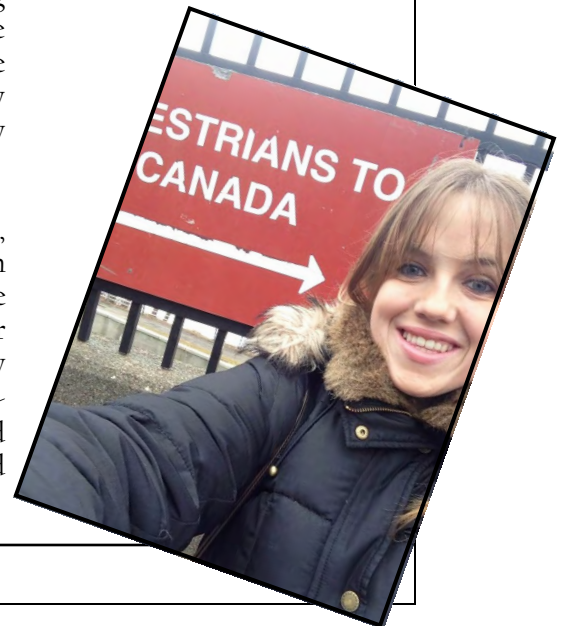
The theme of this year's Northeast Regional Honors Conference was "Standing on the Edge: Challenging Boundaries and Power." As a first time attendee, I was not sure what to expect, but the conference's theme described my experience well: I challenged myself, stepped out of my comfort zone, and learned a great deal.

I was restless the night before I left, both excited and anxious. Fortunately, I was with **Katy** and **Regina**, who were familiar with the conference. Having never been to Niagara Falls, I was very apprehensive packing my clothing. From the weather reports, I knew that I should expect cold temperatures and some rain. Being the over-preparer that I am, I made sure I had an outfit for any possible situation. I stuffed my suitcase to its max capacity, tossed it into the trunk, and away we went.

Upon my arrival, I felt very confident and comfortable as I saw a new array of peers I could interact with and learn from. I began to use the restlessness I had leftover from the evening before to motivate me to step out of my comfort zone and prepare to make the most of this new experience.

On Friday morning, **Katy**, **Regina**, and I had breakfast and listened to the keynote speaker as he provided a background for the conference's annual "Place as Text" exploration. We had various "strands" to choose from when deciding how we wanted to explore the host city of Niagara Falls. Knowing that it would relate to their current Honors course, "Discourses of Slavery in the Americas," **Katy** and **Regina** decided what they had wanted to do. I, on the other hand, was ready to explore outside of New York and visited the Canadian side of Niagara Falls. This was a thrilling excursion. I challenged myself to go to another country unaccompanied by a familiar face. I tagged along with two other students and crossed the Rainbow Bridge and the Canadian Border. From the Rainbow Bridge, we saw The Falls. They were even more breathtaking than I could have imagined. As we continued walking, the temperature gradually decreased. The closer we got to Canada, the more mist we felt coming from The Falls. Eventually, I had to take out my umbrella because the mist's consistency was similar to a light rain. After taking numerous photos and admiring The Falls beauty, my two new friends and I went on to walk to the tourist shopping and dining hotspot, Clifton Hill. There, we enjoyed a pleasant meal at the Rainforest Café and visited some gift shops. Heading back to the United States, I was surprised to see how much tighter the security was, than when entering Canada. I was also shocked that every individual who entered the United States had to pay a 50 cent toll!

Early Saturday morning, **Katy** and I presented the roundtable session, "The Borders of Sanity: Do We Really Need that Xanax?" Based upon our research, we discussed how direct-to-consumer advertising done by pharmaceutical companies has greatly influenced the over prescription of anti-anxiety medications. Our session was inspired by our fall Honors course, *American Anxiety*. This experience was eye-opening and empowering. I am excited to take what I have learned from this experience and apply it to my future traveling and conference opportunities.



Femmes D'Esprit ~ Spring 2014

HONORS CONFERENCE DAY: 4.24.14

On April 24, 2014, the college community gathered for the annual presentation of Honors colloquium, seminar, and contract projects from the academic year..

PRESENTATIONS:

Colloquium: The Body

- **Symone White:** "Potential Effects of the Declaration of the Human Rights of a Child on Vulnerable Populations"
- **Lena Fin:** "The Islamic Veil: Re-defining Female Empowerment Through Erasure of the Body"
- **Shacelles Bonner,** "The Social, Political, and Biological Interpretations of HIV/AIDs in American Society"
- **Lee Anne Daley:** "Subcultural Style as a Means of Deconstructing Gender Definition"
- **Ramya Bharathi:** "Inverting Abled-Bodyness by Analyzing Paraplegic and Paralyzed Bodies in Film"
- **Miranda Polat:** Gender Bias of Body Positivity in the Media"
- **Catherine Santivanez:** "The Immigrant Body"
- **Amanda Hernandez:** "The Tattoo: Carving your Body, Carving your Life"
- **Rashaa Parker,** "Exploring the 'Other' Body: The Cyborg Analogy to Queer Body in Film and Performance"

HONORS CONTRACT:

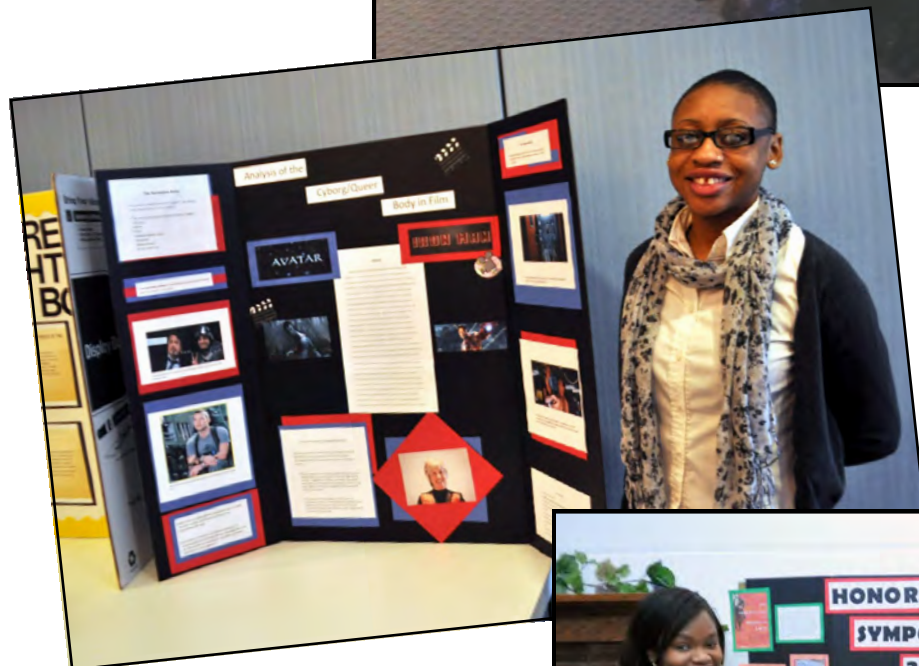
- **Ramya Bharti:** "Smallpox: An Alternate History"

SEMINARS:

- HON 108: Gender & Sexuality
- HON490/491: Senior Symposium: *Lean In*



HONORS CONFERENCE DAY: 4.24.14



OUR RESIDENT ASSISTANT

Claudia Benitez, '16

As the year comes to an end, it is time to say goodbye to our graduating seniors as they venture onto a new chapter in their lives. **Kayla Cummings**, a senior in the School of Arts & Sciences, has been the Honors Living & Learning Community Resident Assistant for the past two years. Kayla is an ambitious student, taking on a dual major in French and International Studies, with a minor in Economics. While at The College of New Rochelle, she has grown and with her ambitious and amiable personality has gained the respect and care from

her fellow peers, especially her residents.



Kayla, wearing a hand-crocheted Santa apron, presents her research project on the history of holiday baking to Honors classmates in "December in America".

During her free time, Kayla enjoys to bake and crochet. Her baked goods are famous in the Honors wing. Last year Kayla put on a program to teach her residents how to crochet and do some simple stitches. She has also made programs available for her residents (and always with her delicious treats) such as (Root) Beer nights, Harry Potter themed parties, and a range of fun movies.

Kayla serves as a role model for her residents. With the study abroad program, Kayla traveled to France during two summer sessions to study the language the culture. During spring break of 2013, she traveled to Spain where she was able to experience a different side of Europe. She has truly taken advantage of all that CNR has to offer. Kayla has been an asset to the Honors Program, inspiring the Honors students to work harder and take advantage of all that the Program — and the college — has to offer. She will be greatly missed for her lovely hair, contagious laugh, and (of course!) her amazing baking skills.

FAREWELL TO HONORS

Regina Alvarado, '14

I never expected the Honors Program to impact me the way it has. I initially joined at the encouragement of **Dr. Lynn Petrulo** when I first visited the college Easter weekend over four years ago. I agreed to do so and having been an AP student all through high school; I felt it gave me a similar competitive edge, one I needed in order to get into Med School. (I had approached college with the false belief that I was wanted to become a doctor.) Yet, the Honors Program gave me something much more valuable than an edge. It gave me the capacity and the initiative to think beyond what I knew and what I thought I should know. To this day, I attribute my academic awakening to the Honors seminar “The Art of Comedy” with **Daniel Smith**. This class sparked in me a love for literature and writing, and slowly began to peel away the “future medical student” façade I was trying to uphold.

It was through the Honors over-pointing system that I could take on English as a second major and thus my transition began. I thrived in my humanities courses and felt burdened by the sciences. But it was difficult for me to let go of the plans I had made for myself. I had always seen myself as science student, yet I never really gave the humanities a fair chance. The pivotal point for turning a new leaf occurred on November 15, 2011. It was the evening that Kate Bolick was going to speak about her piece in *The Atlantic*. I had been looking forward to the lecture immensely but was faced with an obstacle: it conflicted with lecture component of my Physics course. Of course, I had the option of taking one of my allotted absences, but as my classmates at the time would agree, missing the lecture before the midterm is simply not done.

I ran into Professor Smith and Bolick, on my way to class and introduced myself. I explained how I had been grappling with the idea of skipping class to attend the lecture but felt it was safer not to do so. And that's when I got a memorable piece of advice: Professor Smith urged me to consider how I would feel if I were to look back on this moment five years from now. Would I regret missing class or the lecture?

I attended the lecture and look back on the decision today, almost three years later, not regretting a single second. It was that lecture that instilled in me my passion for women's studies, a passion that would later fuel research for my junior colloquium project, which I would later present at the NRHC conference in Philadelphia. I consider my presentation in Philadelphia my proudest academic accomplishment to date and was thrilled to be remembered a year later by other college students attending the conference in Niagara Falls.

I have trouble picturing my college experience without the Honors Program. I imagine I would have stuck with the PreMed track and not have reached the academic potential I have today. By not having been exposed to the academic fields I am now passionate about, I would have struggled with trying to be someone I am not. I don't mean to turn this reflection into a self-discovery cliché but rather make it a tribute to all of those who helped me become the student I am today. I thank **Dr. Bass**, **Dr. Segura-Rico**, **Dr. Lafeur**, and **Professor Smith** for their wisdom and guidance. I hope to one day inspire students the way you all have inspired me.



WHY I'M GLAD I STAYED IN HONORS

Denise Dailey, '14

During my first year at CNR as a transfer student, I remember my advisor asking me why I was not in the Honors Program. I knew nothing about it, so I had no answer. After doing my own research, I was motivated to email Dr. Bass. When I began Honors, as a chemistry major with a passion for math and physics, it took a long time to adapt to the rigorous readings and the high expectations for writing critically. I admit my first Honors seminar was not the best, but as I look back, I wish I would have gotten with the program by the second week.

It was in my third Honors class, "Women and the Law," that I exceeded my expectations and created the best project of my entire college experience, focusing on the legalities of patents for the BRCA-gene. I hold it very dear to my heart. At the time, I was still struggling with balancing courses in science, Honors, and core. I reached a point where I wanted to quit Honors, because I was trying to do equally well in all my science classes, which also were very challenging. The pressure of having to create something to present on Honors Conference Day overwhelmed me. I remember crying in the bathroom, crying to Father Joe in Campus Ministry, then rushing to Dr. Bass' office hoping she would understand and say something like 'this is your choice, do as you wish.' Fortunately, she didn't, and I had no choice but to turn my research into something presentable. And to my surprise, I managed to put together a draft of my research paper and project in a week. I finished everything on time.

The colloquium project sparked my interest in women's healthcare issues and legal policy. Thus, I was no longer just a science major in the Honors program, but one with a cause that I was fighting for.



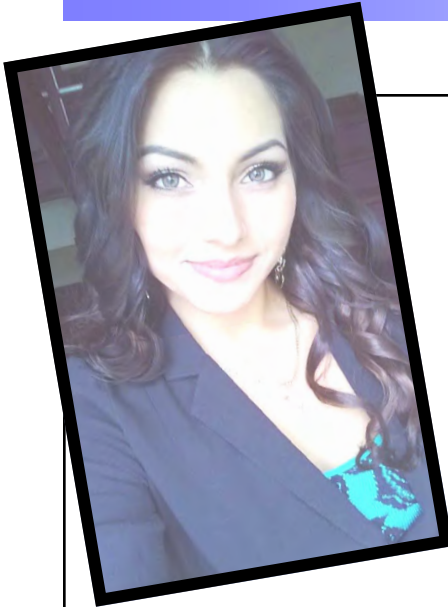
During my four years at CNR I had a hunger for learning about issues that I never learned in my science classes. I explored the option of doing several different minors under social sciences, but my schedules always proved to be a problem. This is when I grew to love Honors classes, because they filled that gap. The Honors Program has allowed me to push my limits, in the classroom, inside my mind, and, with the wonderful and unpredictable peers I met, also with my social life. Thus, it eventually became an actual "honor" to wear the title of an "Honors student" because of the reputation my peers and I held on campus. The way I was able to develop my confidence in Honors amongst a group of equally brilliant and creative young women from all fields helped make me more well-rounded (and a better candidate for medical schools may I add!) I no longer wanted to just be an

executive member of the Science and Math Society. I wanted to explore Model UN, music, *Phoenix*, *Tatler*, CNR Drama, and W.I.L.D.E. Some of these I achieved, others my schedule never permitted me to. Yet, the various interests made me an actively involved commuter and science major.

I am more literate because of Honors, with the many novels, autobiographies, and articles I read in each seminar. It is a very gratifying feeling when you can have stimulating conversations about culture and literature from around the world. I love science, but when a professor says to me "I would never have thought you were a science major," I beam inwardly. I soon realized that most science professors admired students who could create more than just equations with letters. You would have never thought a program as simple as Honors could give rise to so much, but it really can if you take with you, something from every class, every professor and every student you meet. The brilliance is contagious.

LEARNING FOR LIFE

Catherine Sanivanez, '14/Ramya Bharathi, '15



Participating in the Honors program was a great learning experience. Not only was I challenged conceptually, but I was also challenged as a person with a responsibility to society. My writing improved ten fold within a semester. I was exposed to ideas, and people, that I may have otherwise not encountered.

The professors connected issues from our readings to real-life issues as opposed to simple theories from a textbook. I was also given the opportunity to attend a play on Broadway, *Cinderella*. This was my first play ever attended and I was awe struck. The Honors Program is more than just research and studying, it is a learning experience for oneself and exposes students to information that can be used inside and outside of the classroom.

— Catherine

During my time in the Honors Program offered at CNR, I was exposed to many experiences that I would not have the opportunity to do if I wasn't part of the program. Attending Broadway shows and going on trips were just the perks of being an honor student. The real benefits came from the courses I took, the professors who taught them and the faculty who supported me. As a science major, I was challenged by almost all of the courses. I had to go beyond my comfort zone and develop a different and more abstract way of thinking than with science courses. The professors provided constant support and advice to make sure I was successful. The first year offered the tools and skills to be successful in the honors courses as well as other courses. These skills were improved upon during the second year. By taking Honors Colloquium I&II during the third year, my skills were tested. These structured courses helped me develop my own courses by doing Honors Contracts. It gave me a chance to explore my own interests outside of the normal curriculum. The program has given me the opportunity to take extra courses on top of the normal course load every semester. As a result, I was able to test and push my limits and improve on important skills such as time management, and finish my undergraduate degree in three years. On top of the academic components, conversations with the college President and notable speakers highlighted my experiences as an honors student. I say without any doubt, that the Honor's Program truly enhanced by college career and helped me become a successful student with a variety of skills. - Ramya



FAREWELL TO HONORS

Amelia Ellis, '13

I would first like to mention that I came from a high school like this:



Monument Regional HS, *Grease* 2008, Amelia (left) as Patti Simcox

And will be going out like this:



CNR Drama, , *A Midsummer Night's Dream* 2013, Amelia (right) as Helena

I had a bit of a different path than most folks I'm graduating with this year. I came to CNR in 2009 with an anticipated graduation date of May 2013, went part-time in Spring 2011, and then took a semester off. So to finally be graduating after years of being the "bridesmaid but never the bride" is very exciting. That said, I know people who have been in college for a much longer time, balancing serious health issues or a part-time job with school. For me, to be graduating in a fairly timely manner, and for the most part unscathed, is quite the blessing. Yes, I've had my ups and downs; yes, I've wanted to call it all quits a few times; but since my "reintroduction" in Spring 2012,

I've lived strongly by the philosophy, "College is meant to take you for a wild ride." If it hasn't been wild, it didn't do its job. The Honors Program has been an integral part of this ride. Because of Honors, I've been able to see ideas from other classes come to fruition. For example, I took an idea that started in INS 400, "The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager," and turned it into my Honors junior colloquium project. I challenged myself right from the beginning, taking Dr. Bass's "Popular Culture and the Making of Modern America" the first semester of my first year, and finished up in Senior Symposium discussing issues with classmates (and disagreeing with them) raised in books like *Lean In*. But there is one thing I've never expressed that I would like to address now about the Honors Program (this is not a bad thing, I promise). I may have been performing roles like Patti Simcox on my high school's stage, but my home life during middle and high school was incredibly tumultuous. Before my first year of college, I had just moved from a neighborhood where we were robbed on two separate occasions in the middle of the night, we were calling the police every other week because of the domestic violence next door, and Hells Angels rode their motorcycles down the street in the early morning. When I finally moved my junior year of HS to Great Barrington, my aunt was diagnosed with cancer, my mother needed heart surgery, and my father went into rehab. The summer before I left, my father cleaned up, but my aunt passed away. So I came to college hesitant, with stitches on my face (I just had surgery), not over my aunt's death, and not over what I had to go through in high school (angry teenager syndrome). But going into the Honors Living & Learning residential wing, forming that close-knit community, was so comforting, so helpful. It made my freshman year manageable, despite the chaos that stirred at home. My fellow Honors students and those challenging classes provided me with healthy distractions: they lifted my spirits—college lifted my spirits. I cannot imagine where I would be without the Honors Program. I am grateful for what I've been given. I am grateful for the friends I have made. I am grateful that I was accepted into Honors and have known what it means to be "student." And so, as I leave this year, I'd like to end with my high school yearbook quote (from David Bowie). "I don't know where I'm going from here, but I promise it won't be boring."

FAREWELL FROM FAR AFIELD

Alissa Sciomerri, '14

As I'm writing this the New York Rangers are in the playoffs and are leading the Philadelphia Flyers 3-2 in the series. The winner will face the Pittsburgh Penguins. Though it was a sport I never actually played, hockey became what I was known for around CNR and the Honors Program. Considering I did my junior colloquium project on the memory of "Miracle on Ice" I have a feeling I'll be known as the "hockey girl" for years to come.

A lot has changed since my first-year. Through the Honors Program, I was able to branch out of my discipline, biology, and challenge myself in ways I would have never thought possible. I've had the pleasure of meeting so many diverse and interesting individuals and spent four years an easy train ride away from New York City. I've done so many things I would never even consider doing in high school. I saw Daniel Radcliff on Broadway in *How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying* as part of an Honors field trip, I've been to 6 Ranger games (with a 3-3 record), and six different concerts. I've been on four different athletic teams (volleyball, swimming, cheerleading and cross country) and worked on several productions with CNR drama. Sure, at times it felt busy and overwhelming balancing classes with two or more extracurricular activities at a time, but somehow I managed to get through it. A good playlist can do wonders.



Since I graduated in December, I've been keeping pretty busy. Since February, I've been doing volunteer work with the Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research and Preservation (see photo!) which rescues and rehabilitates sick and injured marine mammals and sea turtles as well as with the Long Island Aquarium and Exhibition Center. I have just recently attended a training session to work as part of the Riverhead Foundation's rescue team which works directly with the animals that are brought into the facility and I have done several seal releases. I have also been hired by the Long Island Aquarium's education department, where I give lectures about the various exhibits, supervise the interactive exhibits and give tours. In the fall I hope to be interning with the aquarium's mammal training staff.

To the underclassmen reading this, I wish you all good luck in your college careers. To my fellow seniors: Congrats guys, we did it.

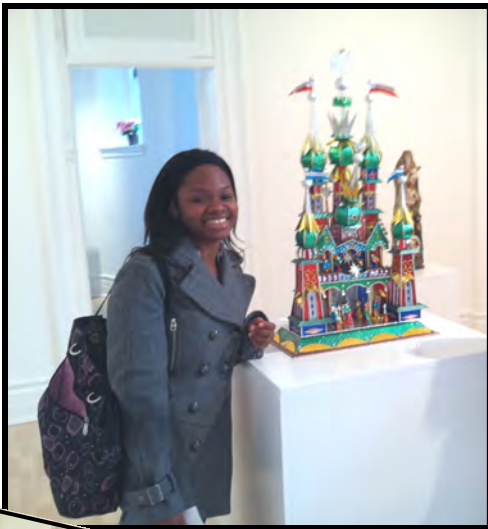


A FINAL LOOK BACK AT OUR SENIORS



Above left: **Alissa** and **Regina** join junior Alyssa in the Honors Center to read Bogosian's *SuBurbia*; Above: **Regina** and **Denise** join first-year Colleen at the Brooklyn Museum; Left: **Regina** is honored by Dr. Escribano at the Honors Convocation last fall.

Spring 2014~ Femmes D'Esprit



Clockwise starting top left: **Denise** takes in the crèche exhibit at Castle Gallery for “December in America,”; **Amelia** is honored at the Student Leadership Dinner; **Regina** discusses her colloquium project with Daniel Smith; Honors students have brunch with President Judy Huntington, including seniors **Kayla**, **Amelia**, and **Ramya**.





Farewell Seniors!

Cathy Santivanez

Kayla Cummings

Alissa Sciomerri

Regina Alvarado

Amelia Ellis

Ramya Bharathi

Denise Dailey